

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 22, 2002

The Honorable Frank Wolf
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, State and Judiciary
H-309 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515-6017

Dear Chairman Wolf:

As members of the Washington State delegation, we wish to express our strong support for increased funding for the Washington State Methamphetamine Initiative. This program was funded at \$2 million in FY 2001 and at \$4 million in FY 2002 under the Methamphetamine Enforcement and Clean-up account. We would appreciate your consideration of \$6 million for the Washington State Methamphetamine Initiative in FY 2003.

As you are aware, meth quickly is becoming the most dangerous drug in the United States. Production in Washington State continues to skyrocket, resulting in the unfortunate distinction of being second only to California in the number of labs encountered. In 2001, 1,886 labs were discovered – up from 1,454 labs in 2000. In addition, drug treatment admissions for meth use have increased over 600 percent over the past seven years.

In August 2001, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) sponsored a statewide methamphetamine summit in Washington State. The meth summit brought law enforcement, health, and education officials at all levels of government together for the first time to develop a comprehensive strategy for fighting meth in Washington. The DEA and NCPC expect this summit will serve as a national model for other states seeking to cope with escalating methamphetamine production and use. This funding request will help support this collaborative effort, providing the state's meth program with resources for investigations, prevention efforts, treatment, and site cleanup activities.

The federal funds provided to the Washington State Methamphetamine Initiative have enabled the program to have an immediate impact on our state's fight against meth. The FY 2001 funding provided substantial assistance for law enforcement in five of the most affected counties – one of the primary reasons for the increase in labs discovered and meth-related arrests in 2001. FY 2002 monies are directed to law enforcement entities in more than 19 counties and cities across the state of Washington, which should greatly enhance the ability of these jurisdictions to cope with the growing threat presented by meth. Funds from that grant also helped to start a pilot treatment project in Pierce County, Washington, already helping more than 50 recovering addicts, many of whom are parents of young children. We are very pleased to note that the first four individuals will graduate from the program – clean and sober – in April.

The FY 2002 grant will help to establish similar programs in Spokane County in Eastern Washington and in another county to be designated.

Our request for FY 2003 will enable the Initiative to reach more affected regions in the state. Together with \$7.5 million included in Washington State's budget for the current biennium, this \$6 million will train and equip additional law enforcement personnel to increase regional response capabilities and perform proactive investigations statewide. It will expand substantially treatment admissions, specifically targeting mothers with young children, and improve services to children of meth users. Also, the funding will add staffing to clean up meth labs and dump sites and complete the development and training of meth prevention action teams in all 39 counties of the state.

We are all strongly encouraged by what has been accomplished thus far, and remain confident that continued support will result in a program of truly national value that can provide other states with solutions to their own drug problems. Again, thank you for your past support and consideration of this funding request.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER DUNN

GEORGE NETHERCUTT

NORM DICKS

BRIAN BAIRD

DOC HASTINGS

ADAM SMITH

RICK LARSEN

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